1: Shternberg--1 E-5 (1890-1897, 1910) 1933 RX2 Gilyak RX2

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L. IA. Shternberg as an Investigator of the Peoples of the Far East

IA. P. Al'kor (Koshkin)

*114 L. IA. Shternberg devoted a significant part of his life to the study of the peoples of the Far East. His scientific work began with the study of the Gilyak on Sakhalin (in 1890); it so prematurely ended with a paper on the "Ainskaia problema /The Ainu Problem/" for the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (in 1927), upon his return from the Third Pacific Congress in Tokyo.

In his youth Shternberg did not think of scientific work. While still on the schoolbench, he dreamed of giving his whole life "for the good of the people." As a student in the Physics-Mathematics Department of St. Petersburg University and later in the Department of Law of the Novorossisk University, Shternberg took part in revolutionary activity, to which he gave his best young years. He was arrested in 1886 for active participation in the "The People's Will" party, and in the spring of 1889, after a three-year "stretch" in the Odessa central prison, he was deported for ten years to Sakhalin Island, where his ethnographic work began. Thus, the Tsarist prison and exile pushed Shternberg quite unexpectedly onto the path of a scientist.

*114 It is true that even before his arrest and exile, Shternberg
121 was interested in questions of primitive history and sociology, but
● 127 he received the decisive push in that direction in the Odessa prison, where, due to a happy accident, he became acquainted with F. E Engels' book, The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, in German. This book, as we shall see later, greatly facilitated the beginning of Shternberg's investigations on the history of family-clan relations and had a highly significant influence on his first works.

*114 Setting out in exile, Shternberg nourished the hope that even in distant banishment he would in one way or another be able to be useful to the community, but he did not even think about ethnographic work among the local /xii/ "natives" (in the

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*114 Shternberg commenced a broader and a more systematic study of the Gilyak in the first part of February, 1891, when the administration, having learned of his work with the Gilyak, commissioned him to make a family census of the northwestern Gilyak of Sakhalin from the village of Arkyvo to Cape Marii.

/xiii/ During this trip Shternberg discovered group marriage and a classificatory system of kinship among the Gilyak. Parallel to this, he carefully studied the clan rules and religious views of the *114 Gilyak. It might be mentioned here that prior to his scientific re- ● 127 search he had not even had the opportunity to become familiar with the basic works of that time on the ethnography of the Far East. This is what he writes in the preface to his "Materialy /Materials/": "Due to the conditions of my stay on Sakhalin, even Schrenck's work on the history and material culture of the Amur peoples remained inaccessible to me for a long time... (1). From a careful

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1. Materialy po izucheniiu giliatskogo yazyka i fol'klora /Materials on the Study of Gilyak Language and Folklore/, Vol. I, p. viii, St. Petersburg, 1908, publication of the Academy of Sciences.

analysis of Shternberg's literary heritage and of his first printed works, it is clear that at the time of his first trip to the Gilyak he had not had the opportunity to acquaint himself with either Schrenck's book, Ob inorodtsakh Amurskogo kraia /Concerning the Natives of the Amur Region/, or even Morgan's Ancient Society (Drevnee obshchestvo), Tylor's Pervobytnaia kul'tura /Primitive Culture/, or the other works on the history of primitive society. *114 On the other hand, his prison acquaintance with Engels' classic 121 work was not wasted on him. There is no doubt but that it was 127 thanks to this study that he was able in such an astonishingly short period to discover among the Gilyak group marriage and a classificatory system of kinship and, basically, to realize clearly the full significance of this discovery. Thus, in a letter of the [212] nineteenth of May to his good friend and companion-in-arms in

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*114 revolutionary activity, M. A. Krol', Shternberg writes (2):
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2. I am indebted to the kindness of the widow of the deceased, S. A. Ratner-Shternberg, for acquainting me with the contents of this letter.

"I have discovered among them (the Gilyak) a kinship terminology and family-clan rights identical with those of the Iroquois and the famous punalua family (on the Sandwich Islands), in a word, the remains of that form of marriage on which Morgan based his theory and which served as a point of departure for Marx' and Engels' works on Der Ursprung der Familie, des Staates, u.s.w. /the origin of the family, of the state, etc./. The interesting clan organization of the Gilyak, however, rests on this kinship system. At first I was afraid to trust my own discovery, but, having let not a single family or a single yurt go by during the census without detailed questioning as to what different members of the clan and family call one another and who has what rights, I finally became convinced (3). /xiv/ Al-

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3. Earlier in the same letter Shternberg mentioned that he had covered 1,040 Gilyak in his census.

though there are voluminous studies on the Gilyak, no one in the literature known to me has studied this aspect of the question."

*114 After his investigation of the Gilyak of the northwest coast, there followed a series of other trips which resulted in a full ethno-
[125] graphic study of all Sakhalin. Thus, in June, 1891, he took the census of the Gilyak and the Orochi on the river Tym' and on the east coast of Sakhalin, and a partial one of the Tungus. In the winter of 1891 he encountered the Olcha who visited Sakhalin late in the fall for trading purposes. He spent the summer of 1892
[125] traveling on the river Poronai and around the entire southern part of Sakhalin as far as the settlement of Kosunaya, where, along with the Ainu and the Orok, he also studied and took a census of the Gilyak.

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101 spring up even between primitive peoples is curious and yet characteristic: the Tungus with indignation and proud contemptuousness deny their kinship, not only with the Gilyak, but even with the Orochon, saying: "We are the Tsar's people and baptized, while the Gilyak and the Orochon eat dogs!"

101 829 The Gilyak themselves include themselves in the Mongol-Manchu tribe, asserting that the Gilyak and the Manchu are "khal-nyakhr" ("khal" -- clan, people, tribe; "nyakhr" -- one). The Gilyak also consider the Chinese and the Japanese kindred peoples, saying that a Manchu was "ytk-utgu" (father, ancestor, man), and a Japanese was "ytk-umgu" (ancestress, woman), an assertion which will be clear from the material be-
197 low. The Sakhalin Gilyak speak a language in common with the language of the Gilyak /348/ living at the mouth of the Amur and on the continental coast of the Tatar Strait, but quite distinct from the language of the Lower Amur Gilyak and the Tungus.

103 As to the question of the appearance of the Gilyak on
● 127 Sakhalin, there is no doubt that they are arrivals from the conti-
174 nent. The materials of the 1891 census and observations and interviews with the Gilyak equally confirm in this case a conclusion which could have been made a priori. The census first of all proved that the settling of the island by the Gilyak went from the north to the south. The ancestors of the Gilyak of the settlement of Tyka, for instance, came from the settlement of Nyur, which is the northernmost settlement on the western shore of
[614] Sakhalin. Of the two foremost clans in the settlement of Arkyyvo, one comes from the settlement of Nyanivo (in the north of Sakhalin), the other from the settlement of Tanga, whose inhabitants in turn belong to the ancient clan of the settlement of Choma (on the continent), etc. The census further proved that each clan of the Sakhalin Gilyak is only a branch of a clan which lives along the continental coast. Finally, the language,
[184] religious beliefs, customs, and morals and manners of the Sakhalin Gilyak are identical with those of the Gilyak of the continental coast,

SS 114 [113] /5 cont./

1. (cont.)
chim. tirés du Bulletin, Vol. II, pp. 346-355, 446-456, 492-497; Vol. III, pp. 8-17; Mél. russes, Vol. III, pp. 49-65, 297-306, 344-363.

southern tip, by the way, I had already touched in the summer of 1854, along the coasts of the Sea of Okhotsk and the northern part of the Sea of Japan, to the Gorin and the Ussuri, and, finally, on the return trip, up the entire Amur and a part of the Argunj /Argun/ River. During the winter travels in particular, I lived with and among the natives entirely. Therefore, it was principally the peoples of the lower Amur region, especially the Gilyak, but also the Olcha (Mangun) and Goldi, with whom I had an opportunity to become more closely acquainted, whereas I came in contact with the others only more or less fleetingly.

G 114 127 For certain information concerning the Gilyak I am also indebted to Middendorff /Middendorf/, who /6/ became acquainted with this people as early as 1844, and, to be sure, on the extreme northwestern border of their area of distribution. He did not publish in his travel account the notes written down by him at that time, but kindly passed them on to me for use in this place, and they are in fact of great value to me, since I myself did not visit this part of the Gilyak area. Therefore, in the following where I refer to Middendorff without citing his writings, my information comes from the handwritten notes mentioned. A great deal was also contributed for a more detailed knowledge of the peoples of the lower Amur by the circumstance that during the time I had my headquarters in the midst of the Gilyak area, my friend and present colleague, C. J. Maximowicz, had his in Olcha territory, and, to be sure, in the Mariinski Post established shortly before. His information concerning the Olcha and Goldi collected at that time and on a later trip in 1859 and 60 and passed along to me forms an essential part of the following information on these peoples. This was a fortunate arrangement for ethnographic research because it is precisely the peoples of

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GSS 121 128 /8 cont./

Finally, by constantly keeping the entire region before our eyes, it may also lead to a more complete ethnographic picture of it.

GSS 126 128 The accompanying plates are also arranged in accordance with this treatment of the subject. I still have a few words to say about them beforehand. Since the Academy sent a draftsman with me, my aim was to give as clear and detailed a picture as possible of the life of the Amur peoples and everything connected with it, their dwelling, clothing, their household, hunting and fishing apparatus, their tombs, idols, and the like, by means of drawings, too. Concerning certain things in particular, such as, for example, the degree of skill shown by these peoples in making their utensils, the taste expressed in the decoration of their implements as well as their clothing, the possible influence on this from foreign, Chinese, /9/ and Japanese patterns, no judgment can be formed without the illustrations. A clear, concrete idea of the total being and doings of a people, however, can certainly be obtained only with a certain completeness of pictorial representations. It therefore did not seem proper to me to be too frugal with the number of these illustrations or to omit them wherever in earlier travel accounts, on the occasion of discussing other and especially Siberian peoples, similar, though at times rather crude representations are found. For the same reason I have only in rare cases taken note of the illustrations, neat as they are, which are found in the rather inaccessible atlas of Mr. Maack's /Maak/ trip in the Amur region, and all the more since the work concerned (1) contains no ethnographic text, but only

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GSS [113]

1. Puteshestvie na Amur", soversh. po rasporiazheniiu Sibirsk. Otdiela Imp. Russk. Geogr. Obshch. v" 1855 g. R. Maakom" /A Journey to the Amur, completed by R. Maak under the auspices of the Siberian Section of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society in 1855/, St. Petersburg, 1859.

2: Schrenck--16 E-5 (1854-1856) 1881-1895 RX2 Gilyak RX2
Southeast Siberia RX1

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a meager list of the illustrations, most of which even lack any information as to which of the Amur peoples they refer to. In any case the objects pictured there do not belong to the Gilyak, since Maack's trip did not touch their territory. Some of our illustrations could have been omitted by references to several woodcuts that are found in the last issue of Middendorff's travel report -- to illustrate the household implements of the Nigidal /Negidal/ -- but this issue had not appeared at the time when the following plates had all been prepared.

As stated above, since it is the peoples of the lower Amur region who are to be discussed here in greater detail, most of our illustrations refer to them, and especially to the Gilyak. Indeed, whenever identical or very similar objects from various Amur peoples were available to me, I always gave preference to the Gilyak one for the illustration, in order thus to provide as complete a picture as possible of at least one of these proples, and unquestionably the most unique and interesting one.

By far the most of the illustrations added here are by the draftsman of my expedition, Mr. W. Poliwanof, during our stay in the Nikolayev Post; a few were also drawn or at least sketched during the trips. I owe a not insignificant portion of the illustrations, especially the sketches of many scenes from Gilyak life, to Mr. Maximowicz, with whom I made many a trip in the Amur region. Still others were first made here from ethnographic objects brought back from the trip, for example, most of the idols by Mr. A Baumer, the drawings of Gilyak patterns by Mr. Nezwetajef. Finally, I had access to a collection which was made in the sixties, in part by W. Lanin in Nikolayevsk, in part by other photographers, namely, many photographs of the Gilyak, Goldi, and Ainu. All the material was handed over to the skilled artist, Dmitrijef-Orenburgskij, in order in part to work on it and to perfect it, and in part to make lithographs corresponding to the format of this work. Since Mr. Dmitrijef himself /10/ was never in the Amur region, it was all the more incumbent on me to examine all his work closely with regard to its faithfulness to detail, and I must

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1. (cont.)
which projects farthest to the north, and the mouth of the Amur (Beitr. zur Kenntn. des Russ. Reiches, Vol. IX, Part 2, St. Petersburg, 1855, p. 618).

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For the sake of clarity and because many of the individual villages of the Gilyak will be mentioned repeatedly in the course of this work, I give the following tabular list of all the Gilyak villages, in part from me, and mostly from personal experience, and in part from Glehn's statements, and the number of their winter dwellings.

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/The following chart, which runs across pp. 362-363 in the original text, is given on four pages in the translation, the first page bearing the four columns pertaining to the mainland, the second page bearing the four columns pertaining to Sakhalin, and the next two pages containing the final column of notes./

/671 cont./
others were to follow (3). This method was at least more pur-

3. Concerning this, see p. 662 above.

poseful, for it increased the food supply of the people and saved dog food, the lack of which was already making itself felt at the time.

I never saw or heard of a Gilyak who, upon entering a house, greeted the host, hostess, or any other acquaintance with a word or gesture, nor is it done upon his departure. As I gather from Middendorff's handwritten notes, given to me to use, this coming and going without any salutation surprised him, too. With me they likewise constantly came and went without a salutation, or at most, later, with a "sdrástwui" and "proschtschâi" learned from the Russians. Only in the presence of the Manchu and Chinese do they imitate the /672/ Tungusic Amur peoples by dropping on one knee in front of them and bowing their heads, but this is done only in order to gain their favor and to avoid being punished by them, since the Manchu officials in Ssan-ssin and other places strictly insist upon such a show of deference.

But what surprised me even more is the fact that the word "thanks" seems to be missing entirely from their lexicon. I never heard it used by them, either among themselves or to me. Middendorff and Glehn had the same experience. I should like to ascribe this to the incompleteness of our word list, which is in general very poor in expressions for abstract concepts and emotions. On the other hand, it is hardly to be assumed that if they really had gratitude in their hearts, they would not have a word for it and that it should simply have always eluded us. After all, we saw them in all kinds of situations when they received services or help and hospitality offered almost to excess. Is it possible that guests who have been sheltered, despite notoriously scanty means, for days as a result of storms setting in and who have been fed along with all their dogs, as the Gilyak do among one another, depart without having said a word of thanks? Is everything based only on national communism or on the certainty of reciprocity in similar cases? With regard to me,

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*796 114 asked him to invite to his house this time instead a friend of mine ("amal," as the Gilyak say), namely, Mr. von Ditmar, and, as his companion, Mr. von Brevern, who was well-known to us. The [126] former promised me to keep a faithful journal concerning the [127] further course of the bear festival in Tebach, and the latter -- to make sketches of it -- a promise that both gentlemen kept, having put at my disposal the highly rewarding material which they brought back from Tebach (1).

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1. Mr. C. v. Ditmar, now unfortunately deceased (since April, 1892), is the famous explorer of Kamchatka and the author of the work, Reisen und Aufenthalt in Kamtschatka /Journeys and Sojourn in Kamchatka/ (see Beiträge zur Kennt. des Russ. Reiches, Series 3, Vol. VII).

*796 824 When, on January 27 (February 7), at eight o'clock in the morning, Ditmar and Brevern arrived in Tebach and entered Judin's house, they found the dogs' table removed and the floor in the whole middle area of the house thickly covered with fir branches (again from Picea ajanensis, Gilyak twisk). In front of the second center-post of the house, standing opposite the bear hearth and near the bench of honor, stood a large, four-cornered rack profusely decorated likewise with fir branches, young fir trees, and curled wood-shavings (zach), and made out of alder poles, the trunks of small young trees, which, according to ancient custom, must always be unpeeled and tied together at the intersections only with bast and the yarn of old fish-nets. From the uppermost shelf *796 of this étagère-like rack, the unskinned heads of the two bears belonging to Judin looked down, as it were, into the yurt and upon the people in it, but the rest of the skins, except for /715/ the toes, claws, and soles, hung down to the ground behind the rack (1). On

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1. See Plate XLIX /p. 1249/. Because of the above-mentioned hindrances that the Gilyak